

Client: Patrick Holford
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The nine day LIVE

Five habits to break

New year means a new you. And what better way to wipe the slate clean than with a healthy detox of your whole body? Leading celebrity nutritionist Patrick Holford has developed a nine-day plan, based on scientific fact, which focuses on giving your liver a helping hand. "The detox programme will give you foods that super boost your liver's ability to detoxify, plus liver-friendly supplements, so that you will start to feel better immediately," says Patrick, co-author of *The Holford 9-Day Liver Detox*.

"The liver is the clearing house for toxins. So when it cannot process toxins fast enough because of overload, the toxins have to be stored in the body to be dealt with later," he continues.

And when they're stored, it's in the fat cells, leading to further weight gain. Then, of course, there's the bad skin, puffy eyes, bloating and tiredness that all add to the need to detox.

Celebrities such as Carol Vorderman, 47, and Beyoncé Knowles, 26, know the importance of ridding yourself of toxins. "The principles of the diet are good for anybody who just wants to feel great," adds Patrick.

So follow his nine-day plan for a more radiant, happier you...

Wheat
Found in bread, pasta, cereals and a whole host of other foods, wheat contains a protein called gluten, and specifically a type of gluten called gliadin. This isn't particularly great for our digestive tracts. Foods the body cannot digest can seep through our gut walls and are recognised as toxins in the blood stream, so it's important to avoid these during your detox to give your liver a good break. You should also cut out anything made from the following gluten grains: spelt, rye, barley, kamut and triticale. Eat oats, brown rice, and quinoa instead.

Milk
The most common food allergy is to cow's milk due to the protein it contains. Then there are the traces of hormones and antibiotics found in milk, which again put stress on your liver. Therefore it's advisable to cut out milk and foods made with it – like cheese, cream, butter and yoghurt. But you can use rice or soya milk and nonhydrogenated vegetable oil spreads instead.

Caffeine
Found in coffee, tea and some drinks like cola, and foods like chocolate, many of us can't live without our caffeine fix. Well now's the time to break the habit! Your liver has to work very hard to detoxify caffeine, which will distract it from breaking down other toxins. Caffeine is also a diuretic, meaning it encourages the body to get rid of fluids, causing toxins to be re-absorbed by the body.

Alcohol
Alcohol taxes your liver and gut, causes cancer, destroys nutrients and is dehydrating. As you probably had plenty over Christmas and New Year, cutting it out for nine days shouldn't be hard. Alcohol is metabolised to acetaldehyde by an enzyme called acetaldehyde oxidase, then to harmless chemicals which are excreted by the body. But if the enzyme is overloaded you end up with too much acetaldehyde, which leads to ketoacidosis – or a hangover. In light of all this, it's clear that even the odd glass of wine is a definite no no during your detox.

Bad fats
There are good fats and bad fats. The good fats are called omega-3 and omega-6 "essential" fats, which we need and are found in nuts, seeds and fish. Bad fats are damaged fats, called trans fats, which some supermarkets are working to rid from their products. They're found in deep-fried food and some food containing hydrogenated vegetable oils. They're difficult to digest and slow to detoxify, clogging up your liver for long periods when it could be dealing with other toxins.

Fats to avoid during the detox are: all meat, fried fish, fried eggs, processed foods with hydrogenated fats, processed fat spreads, French fries and other fried veg.

Swap cow's milk for rice or soya varieties

Caffeine is hard work for your liver

Buttery spreads are a no-no

Try to cut out wheat from your diet

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detox



Overdone Christmas? Give your body a break and kick-start a new regime with this exclusive detox from Patrick Holford



Five habits to make

Drink eight glasses of water a day

Drinking around 1½ litres of water a day will boost your energy and mental clarity. If you exercise regularly, or if the weather is hot, you'll need to make sure you drink even more. Water's great when you are detoxing because it helps dilute toxins in the blood, supporting your kidneys. And there are other drinks besides plain water that can contribute to your intake. For example, hot water with lemon is a great detoxifier as it helps the liver flush away its toxins into the bowel. Have a cup first thing in the morning and make sure you keep a bottle of water at your side all day to help you drink more.

Eat the five big superfoods each day

Superfoods have been in the news a lot recently, and rightly so because they are packed with nutrients and antioxidants and are free from anything bad, including too much natural sugar.

One of the simplest ways to detoxify your liver is to set yourself the rule of eating five superfood portions a day. These can include:

- A tablespoon a day of ground seeds.
- A serving a day of super greens (a handful each of baby spinach leaves, watercress, parsley and basil with either sun blush tomatoes, pine nuts, pumpkin seeds or avocado).
- A serving of any of the following vegetables: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower or kale.
- A garlic clove, a small onion, a shallot or four spring onions every day.
- A home-made superfood juice or smoothie drink.

Maximise your intake of anti-ageing antioxidants

Oxidants can get into our bodies through eating burned or fried food, breathing in exhaust fumes and smoking cigarettes. Some oxidants originate within the body from the creation of energy in our cells, and although we need that to stay alive, oxidants can cause cell damage if they're not dealt with properly. Antioxidants are key players when it comes to disarming oxidants (free radicals) in the body. Some antioxidants are made in the body and others are provided in our food, for example in the form of vitamins A, C and E, and zinc and selenium. Eat plenty of fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds during your detox in order to maximise your intake of antioxidants.

Take detoxifying supplements

Patrick recommends taking a combination of digestive enzymes and probiotics at breakfast, lunch and dinner during the nine-day plan, which are available in some supplements. He also urges detoxers to take a teaspoon of glutamine powder. In addition, he says everyone should be taking three basic supplements every day, even when not detoxing. These are a multivitamin and mineral, one gram of vitamin C plus bioflavonoids found in berry extracts and omega-3 and omega-6 fats.

Introduce detoxifying exercises to your routine

The lymphatic system carries stored toxins to the liver for detoxification. It relies on movement to help detoxify, so it's essential to exercise during the detox. Patrick also recommends breathing exercises called Psychocalisthenics (see www.patrickholford.com/psychocalisthenics), meditation and yoga with breathing exercises to get your lymphatic system moving. A massage mobilises toxins, too, so spoil yourself with one during your nine-day plan.

The Holford 9-Day Liver Detox by Patrick Holford and Fiona McDonald Joyce is out now from Piatkus, priced £10.99



Seeds are detoxifying superfoods...
...as are dark green veggies like broccoli
Try adding supplements to your diet

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